related families. For the townspeople, then, the mi is both a building and the group of relatives who live therein. A townsman who occupies a new dwelling, although he retains his connection with his parental home and may speak of himself as a member of that mi, has formed a new unit which becomes a mi in the social scene in its own right.

The nation of the chieftains and a few large and wealthy families of social pretensions is otherwise. It is customary, as in the case of commoners, to refer to an aristocratic household as a mi, for example, the "House of Issa'll Rag," but a chieftain belongs to a fwuliry, an extended patrilineal group in which a much wider and more exact accounting of kin relationships is kept. The chieftains, as has been said, are, with the exception of serrikh or descendants of the Tutsi of the Peoples, the only persons who memorize genealogies, and this, more than anything else, is the distinguishing feature of the fwuliry. Like the mi, this group is endogamous and exogamous, and is not formally named. The point of reference in its genealogy is some more or less illustrious forebear. Thus the deceased Issa'll Rag and his mother Lalli Khan (who was a collateral relative of Issa'll Rag's father) are referred to as "descendants of Sir Pasha," that famous revolutionary chieftain who achieved a temporary independence from the Turks in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The nucleus of this genealogy is a list of patrilineal ancestors in a direct line ascending some seven or eight generations, a

ories made up solely of males. To this are added mater- 413 ●
nally collateral ancestors and, in the one or two generations closest to the chieftain in question, all of the collaterals, including the names of wives, sisters, and the latter's husbands. The importance of such a lineage line is the fact that it is the sole patent of nobility, itself a matter of the highest social importance, and is of considerable value in the arrangement of marriages and the knowledge of one's potential friends and enemies. It is usually associated with a certain amount of folk history, the wars, revolts, feuds, and other deeds with which its personnel were concerned. Commoners are able to reproduce to some extent the lineage of their chieftain, for, as has been noticed, the house of their leader is also their own, and selected conversations on such topics as aristocratic marriages and lineages offer an everyday source of entertainment. Unlike the mal, the tholliya is not associated with a single house, and its members may live in a large number of separate establishments.

It is convenient here to dismiss the question of inheritance with a cursory survey. Inheritance is not a matter over which the Kurdish populace exercises any unique control, because it was defined in the laws and supplemented over the centuries by the jurists and lawyers of Islam. A whole branch of Islamic jurisprudence is concerned with this complex question, and a number of popular expositions are available to the general reader.[1] In

[1] Abdulfettah Ömeroğlu, Ibid, pp. 143-151.

and in the same area possibly also among some Caucasian groups.[1] However, although marriage patterns do not function to define the relations between lineages, this does not mean that marriage relations and material ties have ceased to be relevant of a structural or specifically political nature. The present paper concerns an hypothesis regarding these implications in the Kurdish lineage organization, specifically the meaning of a pattern of father's brother's daughter marriage, for the consideration of students working with similar problems in the Middle East.

Features of Kurdish culture and society have been described elsewhere,[2] but might be summarized briefly. The Kurds are a linguistic and ethnic group, nearly exclusively Moslem by religion, totalling some three million people.[3] They occupy a semi-continuous territory along the hills and mountains east and north of the Fertile Crescent, divided between the modern states of Persia, Iraq, Turkey, the U.S.S.R., and Syria. Some few groups of Kurds have remained nomadic till the present day, following their herds of sheep, goats, and large cattle into the mountains in the summer and down on the plains in the winter. The great majority are today subsistence farmers, many of whom practice a pattern of localized transhumance. The present discussion relates to the southern districts of Iraq Kurdistan, where material was collected in the field from February to August, 1951.

Two basic types of organization were found: a tribal system, based on descent, and a feudal system, based on class and land ownership. The latter is progressively becoming assimilated into the modern structure of the state of Iraq; the former, a patrilineal lineage system, survives only among the nomads and a minority of the farmers in the more isolated territories.

Kurdish tribal organization is a segmentary lineage organization of very simple type. The largest kinship unit, the *tira*, is a unilineal lineage, divisible into segments according to the charter of patrilineal descent. The genealogical depth of the *tira* varies. For the sedentary Hamawands (location: Kirkuk Liwa, Iraq), the apical ancestor is nine generations removed from the present adult generation; for the nomadic Warde Shaxi (location: summering in Rekhmawi Liwa, Iraq), twelve generations.

Descent does not, though one occasionally, in a political confederacy of variable extension, the most important in southern Kurdistan being at present

1 Lucy J. Lockwood, *Marriage and the Family in Caucasia* (Vienna, 1951).

2 V. F. Minorsky, "Kurds and Kurdistan" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, London, 1935; E. B. Soane, *Grammar and Dictionary of the Kurmanji Kurdi Dialect*, London, 1913; E. B. Soane, *Kurdish Tales*, Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Anthropological Series no. 1, London, 1912; Mehmed Emin Bozarslan, *Kurdische Grammatik*, Erlangen, 1926; Celadet Bedir Khan, *Elements of Kurdish Grammar* (Cleveland: Program Publishing Company, Publication no. 1, Ohio, 1931).

3 The Middle East Journal of International Affairs, London, 1948.

J: Earth E-5 (1991) 1994 MA11 Kard MA11

the [illegible] confederacy of councils as well as ordinary ones. The following discussion will, for the sake of simplicity, refer only to the Hanamonde, an independent tribe of population ca. 1800-1900, which became ordinary some two or three generations ago.

The lineage organization has two main areas of relevance: land ownership, and defense and offense in war. Property rights in land and grazing were not held jointly by the tribe as a whole; exclusive usufruct rights are vested in the localized segments, inhabiting compact villages with a population of 70 to 200 individuals. Within the village territory, men have established rights to certain fields. These rights are passed on from father to son, but are not inalienable, and land is freely redistributed by the village council when the need arises. If a segment becomes extinct, its territory passes as crystal inheritance to the other segments of the lineage, according to the degree of kinship (in any one level of segmentation, "brothers" include "cousins" from inheritance).

Further, until successful pacification in 1910, the lineage was, and still is potentially, also a military unit, mobilized in case if a segment were attacked from without, and divided in opposition according to the segmentary cluster when conflicts arose within the group. Conflicts relating to territorial rights were rife, both within, where they led to feuds, and without, where they led to conquest or loss of territory.

There is a close contrast between the Kurdish and most African systems in the manner with which the problems of feuds and feuds are solved. A man's rights to land are limited to the territory of the village segment of his lineage; a stranger or a person from another lineage segment is accepted into a village only on kind from help ("aqaret") of dependent status. The territorial subdivisions of lineage segments thus tends to be maximized to high degree, and there are few binding mechanisms for developing "stretched" lineages with local territorial and political rights.[1] The segmentary nature of the maximal lineage segments itself directly to geographical distribution, and the respective territories of major and minor segments, inhabited mostly exclusively by them, down to the village level, can be plotted on a map as closely area where one has a view of the valley bottoms. The main integrative factors relevant to segments larger than the village seem to be territorial contiguity, knowledge of common descent, and the importance of the rite as a defensive unit—this last probably being of most weight. The religious or ritual

[1] A prominent relationship may occasionally be established between a neighboring lineage group and a conquered, assimilated peasant population, who needs certain rights as serfs of the ruling lineage. In these cases, a new burden is set up governing intermarriage between the two groups. This relationship, observed on the southern margin of Hanamonde territory, does not seem to be very stable.

In Barth E-5 (1951) 1954 MA11 Kurd MA11

Where the case of marrying an unrelated, "stranger" girl is so high and the expectations for men like them, the inducement for the young men to seek a bride among kin ceases to evident. Consequently, the young men under the "right" choice though they appear subjectively as free, and formidably oppose the opinion, that they are entirely free to seek any bride they might wish. The problem lies in this situation arises around when the institution of the girl's father is, that he should forego his rights as a bridegiver which, as the Kurdish farmers, can advance a minor farmers. Or put somewhat differently, the central problem to what are the advantages gained in this system by giving one's daughter as a bride's son which components are for the loss of the bridegiver.

The answer would seem to lie in the political structure. In the Kurdish lineage system, all groups are subject to a constant pressure towards segmentation and fission, counterbalanced by the interlocking circles of identification normally constituted with segmentary descent system (among the Nuer, territorial vs. descent groups, cross-cutting age-grades among Tallensi, further the moral collaboration between lineages, etc.). The pressure is particularly evident in factional activity within the villages, and emerges in all functional descriptions of Kurdish life.* Kurdish villages are characterized by a constant struggle for political power on the part of a majority of the adult men, at times even women. Such political power is proportional to the number of alliances one can mobilize to support one's claims. In a patrilineal lineage system, a man can expect political support only from his agnatic relatives, those who by descent belong to his political sub-section, and the faction in the village used to be alignments of the younger men of a small lineage segment around an older leader. These segments consist primarily of brothers, sons, and husband sons. The relation to the latter is most critical, it crosses the line of political loss of descent lineage between collateral branches. If a man alienates his sons-in-law by refusing them their traditional rights, he loses their political support. If he, on the other hand, gives them his daughters in marriage, the ties are reinforced and lineage solidarity maintained. The girl's father creates an obligation on the part of the bridegroom's son to give him political support by exempting him from paying the bridegroom. His other sons-in-law are, in the lineage system, till this role as political supporters, consequently they must invariably pay bridegroom. The transaction may thus be regarded as constituting a type of delayed exchange, the father receives political allegiance in his lifetime from his brother's son in return for the daughter which he gives him. In this way, the powers of professional father's brother's

* See, C. J. Bale, Principles of a Business in Kurdistan (London, 1920), E. B. Soane, Through Kurdistan and Kurdistan in Disguise (London, 1926), Hay, op. cit.

daughter's marriage prevents to strengthen the political significance of the lineage system.

10 13.5%	40 53.7%	15 20%	10 12.8%	75

There is some suggestion that the endogamy has similar functional implications in this situation as Fortes suggests endogamy has in the Ewedish system, but that the emphasis comes on the opposition between co-resident clans—whereas the discrepancy between 53 percent marriages within one clan vs. 33 percent with some local co-villagers, in a village where four major and six smaller clans co-reside. The Changars profess the standard explanation: " . . . marriage with the father's brother's son is preferred to any other marriage in order to prevent a stranger obtaining possession of the property and inheritance of the family."[12] This runs through the argument is further weakened by the fact that few villagers do not observe the proper Kinship rule[13] of giving both male and female relatives of the same degree a share of inheritance, in the proportion 2:1—" . . . even if it be seldom that a man dies without leaving any sons, yet the possibility obtains in so far as to allow marriage between the children of brothers to appear specially desirable."[14]

Chagnon and Cone offer a theoretical analysis of parallel cousin marriage, with special reference to the Bedouin[15] which, if I have understood their argument correctly, emphasizes the incompatibility of a subordinate son-in-law relation to a wife-taker with a system of strong political and economic identification with the lineage segment—in this case sons or component of fathers, son, and father's brother. This incompatibility is then resolved by a process of establishing the son-in-law relationship with the father's brother, through marriage with a father's brother's daughter. This appears as a rather round-about way of avoiding the problem from the point of view developed here, but their discussion indicates that the processes are not inapplicable to this marriage pattern among the Bedouin.

The points of view expressed above might be summarized briefly. As compared to most African systems, marriage patterns among the Moslem peoples of the Middle East are illustrated here only in representing the relations between segments of a larger lineage system. The potential relevance of these patterns to social structure may then theoretically be utilized in various ways.

---

12 Above p. 78, where further references to this view are given.
13 A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society (1952), p. 50.
14 Chagnon, op. cit., p. 78.
15 E. R. Chagnon and C. A. Cone, Principles of Anthropology (New York, 1963), pp. 269-90.

In: Davis E-5 (1951) 1954, 56A11 Ehrli 56A11

In many areas of the Middle East, a pattern of close family endogamy and preferential father's brother's daughter marriage has been assumed to be associated with a desire to maintain family property in the face of financial risks of the business. The apparently exceptionally high frequency of father's brother's daughter marriage among the Kurdish tribes with foreign organizations, and possibly among other groups with similar organizations, requires separate explanation. The data of this short discussion has been that such a pattern of father's brother's daughter marriage plays a prominent role in stabilizing the minimal lineage as a cooperative group in factional struggle. Marriages of this type thus serve to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system, and, as in most African systems, reinforce the relations between which lineages, but have, on the contrary, relation to the less powerful lines of descent and organization within the minimal lineage itself.

[illegible]
[illegible]

611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650

ries and between sections of a single tive, the procedure seems to be one of personal revenge, and not retaliation within the whole group to which the offender belongs. It therefore seems useful to emphasize this difference by limiting the term blood feud to its typical form, as found e. g. among the Nuba, and to explore the possible reasons why the jural concepts of collective responsibility, on which the blood feud pattern is based, are not applied to a Kurdish lineage group or segment of such.

It is necessary to emphasize the unique situation, as compared to most societies described in the anthropological literature, in which these jural principles are to be applied. Kurdish lineages are not organized factions within a community, as is often the case in other societies, nor do they have the usual ramifying kinship connections with other groups. With a high frequency of close kin marriage, as described above, a Kurdish lineage, and even the lineage segments down to the village level, are endogamous, socially isolated units. They are, furthermore, geographically isolated. The tive as a whole occupies a large, contiguous territory; the members of the tive are essentially the sole residents of that territory. The local group, the village, is also the lineage segment. There is no indigenous political authority above the level of the maximal lineage; and such a maximal lineage has no vital relations with other groups (except a certain minimum of trade). The maximal lineage can therefore, in the autonomous Kurdish system, be regarded as «the society».

The concept of collective responsibility thus hardly applies in the usual sense to the relations between segments of *different* lineages —between groups in separate societies. Jural principles of this type can only be applied within moderately homogeneous societies, where any individual or a sociological person is an approximate equivalent of his co-lineage mates. (Fortes 1953). With the geographical separation of Kurdish lineages, furthermore, feud between them would in fact necessitate aggression into alien territory. The maximal lineage is a politically unified corporate group for purpose of defence, and thus conflicts on any scale between segments would lead directly to all-out war between the lineages to which they belonged. In such a situation, economic and other considerations favoring continued

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MAII Kurd MAII

792
S34

meanings. We are left with a religious brotherhood, vested with mystic powers, but where membership is regarded as a badge of low social status. The various overt signs of these mystic powers are not systematically manipulated in front of an un-initiated audience, to enhance the position of the performer; nor is the brotherhood developed into a secret society, the secrecy and exclusiveness of which might give status. The interpretation followed here, that membership in the brotherhood offers subjective satisfaction, giving the underprivileged person a field in which he feels that he too can manipulate and control power, seems the only constructive alternative.

Shaikhs and Seyyids. The category of persons called *Shaikhs* and *Seyyids* are, as the dervishes, in a somewhat ambiguous position, but they may, as we have seen in the case of Shaikh Mahmud, make use of their position to great advantage in the political field. Essentially, a *Shaikh* is in Kurdish a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, reckoned patrilineally from Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, and corresponding to the Arabic *Seyyid*. The general position of esteem in which such persons are held is indicated by the term itself, *Shaikh* in Kurdish being borrowed from the Arabic, where it is a political title for tribal chief or elder; *Seyyid* in the Arabic of pre-Islamic times having the similar meaning of elder. Actually, both the terms *Shaikh* and *Seyyid* are used today in Kurdish to indicate descent from the Prophet — a distinction between the two will be made later; the present discussion will concern the *Shaikhs*, who in Southern Kurdistan are by far the larger and more important of the two groups.

By virtue of their descent from the Prophet, *Shaikhs* rate high on a religious scale of sanctity, and it is believed that they embody a variable degree of unseen good power. This vague sanctity is however divorced from implications of greater piety; no significantly greater morality seems to be expected of the *Shaikhs*, and membership in the descent group does not automatically affect the social position of an individual.

792
613 •

To clarify the position of the *Shaikh* group, its distribution and internal structure should be examined. Logically enough, *Shaikhs* are not found among members of tribes *(ilwa)*, since tribal groups constitute patrilineal maximal lineages, and no member of the *ilwa*

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

can trace patrilineal descent from Ali unless the *whole tira* claims such descent. None of the South Kurdish *tiras* attempt this, however. *Shaikhs* are consequently characteristic of the non-tribal areas, where they occupy the whole gamut of social positions from landless laborer to feudal lord.

In characteristic Kurdish fashion, *Shaikh* families tend to split up into small endogamous lineage segments, and, though the census materials gathered from a few villages is not statistically reliable in the matter, there is strong suggestion that FaBrDa or other close kin marriage reaches considerably higher frequency than usual in tenant villages, and approaches that found in the politically organized lineages, the *tiras*. However, any embracive *organization* uniting the whole *Shaikh* descent group, or major segments of it, such as would in fact convert it into a type of widely dispersed *tira*, is lacking. It would on the other hand be equally misleading to think of the *Shaikh* group as an endogamous caste, since extra-group marriages do in fact take place, and the emphasis is not on *Shaikh* endogamy but, in usual Kurdish fashion, on *local lineage* endogamy. It is convenient to think more in terms of these local endogamous *Shaikh* lineages, where they are found in the village community, and relate their comparatively higher endogamy to an effort to retain a special status in the *local* community by not dispersing kinship obligations too widely in that community. Where *Shaikh* families occupy higher social positions, this stress on lineage endogamy tends to disappear, or seems to reflect efforts to prevent the dispersal of family property through the multiple Koranic inheritance rights.

An example of a *Shaikh* lineage group of tenant farmers, residing in a small village community, might be given. Of 33 households in the village, 7 are of the *Shaikh* lineage, the remaining 26 belonging to various larger and smaller kin groups. Of the heads of these 7 *Shaikh* households, 4 have married a FaBrDa, 2 another close relative, and only 1 a non-relative from outside the community (the sister of a neighboring headman). At least in this generation, there is thus no intermarriage with other families in the local community.

The head of the *Shaikh* lineage is regarded as the most important man in the village, but he is not elected *kikha* (village headman).

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1955 NAII Kurd NAII

The present *kikha*, whose father and grandfather held the post before him, belongs to another, slightly larger kin block, counting at least 9 households. Furthermore, the frequency of family endogamy in this family of which the *kikha* is the head is less than 10 %, which may account for his «wider appeal» in the community. Thus the emphasis on the special status of the *Sheikh* lineage also tends to isolate this lineage, in part to their disadvantage.

The majority of the *Sheikhs* in the village are tenant farmers, and tend to be among the better situated. One occupies the position as mullah, to which his son will clearly succeed him. However, one of the *Sheikh* household heads is a landless laborer, giving a class distribution in the *Sheikh* lineage of 5 farmers / 1 laborer, as compared to 18 farmers / 4 laborers in the remainder of the community. The class position of the *Sheikh* lineage as a whole is thus not significantly high.

The status of this small *Sheikh* lineage might be construed to that of the above mentioned Leaders of Derwish, or to that of Sheikh Mahmud, both of whom have achieved their high position in part by virtue of their descent from the Prophet. The most reasonable generalization seems to be that membership in the *Sheikh* descent group defines a type of position in the religious field which contributes to the general esteem in which a person is held, and which may, in certain situations, contribute to justify a high position of actual power, but which in no way automatically ascribes such power to the individual.

A category of travelling holy men, similarly claiming descent from Mohammed, are given the Arabic name *Seyyid* by Kurdish villagers. Whereas the Kurdish *Sheikhs* claim descent specifically from Hussein, one of Mohammed's two grandsons, through a medieval Persian theologian, the claims of the wandering *Seyyids* are more variable. On the other hand, this reference to religious sanctity forms the basis of their livelihood. The apellation *Sheikh* need only imply high rating on a purely religious scale of sanctity — *Seyyids* convert this into a definite status position, fundamental to their occupation. Preferably conspicuously clothed, and wearing green head-dress as a symbol of their status, they ride from village to village carrying old